

Chapter 4 - Outplacement

During periods of downsizing, base closure or furlough, the role of personnelists changes dramatically. Skill and knowledge in outplacement must be developed and applied in lieu of the traditional role of recruiting and staffing (See Figure 4-1). Staffing specialists may find themselves in roles of finding jobs for terminated employees. Personnelists in this role must be able to view the problem from the perspective of an applicant seeking a job and be able to apply creativity to the circumstances at hand.

If the downsizing or base closure occurs during a period of economic weakness, available positions may be scarce or not available in the immediate area. Ability to look beyond the normal recruiting area may have to be applied to place terminated employees in locations not normally considered.

A. Placement Assistance

The following list of outplacement tools and techniques is not considered to be comprehensive or complete but it contains the basics. The list can be expanded or reduced to suit the scope and needs of the local activity in outplacement efforts.

1. Defense Outplacement Referral System (DORS) - is an automated referral system for current DoD employees and their spouses who may be adversely affected due to closure, downsizing, realignment, disestablishment or reduction-in-force. DORS provides maximum placement opportunities for DoD employees through referral to other DoD activities, non-DoD Federal agencies and private industry including state and local governments. Participation in DORS is distinctly separate from the Department's mandatory Priority Placement Program (PPP). Eligibility for DORS typically occurs prior to eligibility for the PPP.
2. Priority Placement Program (PPP) - also known as the "Stopper List". An automated system for the referral of displaced employees for priority consideration in the filling of other DoD vacancies. Specific procedures are found in DoD instruction. Activities are permitted and encouraged to register surplus employees early in this program. Surplus employees may be registered prior to the receipt of a specific advance notice of reduction in force or transfer of function. The only conditions which apply to early PPP registration are that potential registrants will be adversely affected, that individual's priority can be determined, that the timing of the early registration does not conflict with the component reduction or realignment plan and that early registration is offered to all employees similarly affected. Early registration increases the chance of placement prior to separation, which means savings in severance pay, payment of lump-sum annual leave, unemployment benefits, etc.
3. Intergovernmental Placement Assistance Program (IPAP) and Displaced Employee Program (DEP) - are operated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). These programs help insure that persons separated from Federal service receive priority in rehiring before new employees are brought into Federal service. Specific details can be found in FPM Chapter 330 (reference (q)).

4. Reemployment Priority List (RLP) - is a local list required by OPM regulations for activities displacing employees.
5. Publicity to the Community - sometimes a valuable source of placement opportunities. Coordination with the Public Affairs Office is essential to timing and eliminates conflicts, confusing or redundant information. Announcements to the local community are premature if they precede the official notification of Congress, which takes place at the Washington level. Although information leaks are almost impossible to prevent, official publicity must be controlled and timed with the overall plan and milestones for action. Notice to the community serves to put local employers on alert for the possibility of hiring displaced DoD employees and also relays officially the scope of the downsizing for the community. In areas where the DoD activity is the dominant employer, this accuracy is critical to rumor control, avoidance of adverse publicity and panic created by false information.
6. Job Fairs/Clubs - are formed and held at the local activity level. Servicing personnel offices may chose to use the services of a professional or contract outplacement firm to provide training on job search techniques, interviewing for positions and resume writing. The local activity will have to determine "time allowed" for employees to use such services. Regular or periodic meetings of employees who join job clubs serve to reinforce management support for placement of employees and allows employees to share leads and discuss job search problems. Job fairs are normally sponsored by management and afford the opportunity for employers to have space on-site to discuss job opening, interview employees and reduce the burden of outplacement on the servicing personnel office. Another advantage is the reduction of time lost when employees have to leave the activity for an interview. When the employer comes on-site, many interviews can be held in a short time and often "on-the-spot" offers may result. Management must provide ample space for several employers as well as some access to privacy for interviews. The activity will have to tailor the situation to meet local requirements. Evaluations are useful to improve the next job fair; therefore, it is wise to obtain employee reactions and comments. Publicity about job fairs/clubs is critical and should be displayed prominently and issued in activity newsletters, bulletins, etc. Lunch time meetings of job clubs afford the opportunity to share experiences, spread information, show video presentations featuring the commander and/or other members of top management to keep employees informed. A "question & answer" format to such videos is often successful. Questions can range from RIF procedures and rights to efforts in job fairs/clubs and success rates.
 - a. Each job club should consist of a leader (selected by the department and trained by the Outplacement Staff and a small group of employees (10-20). In those organizations where large numbers are targeted for downsizing, as many as 15 to 20 job clubs may be formed. Each organization should then assign a Job Club Coordinator who will coordinate all activities with the various job club leaders in their area.
 - (1) Responsibilities of the Outplacement Staff:
 - (a) train job club leaders
 - (b) provide workshops to members
 - (c) sponsor job fairs and employer interviews

- (a) facilitate weekly job club leader meetings
- (2) Responsibilities of Job Club Coordinators:
 - (a) receive information from outplacement staff
 - (b) disseminate information to job club leaders
 - (c) serve as liaison between outplacement staff and department management
 - (d) attend job club leader meetings weekly
 - (e) receive and disseminate weekly job vacancy packets
- (3) Responsibilities of Job Club Leaders:
 - (a) attend job club leader training
 - (b) lead groups of 10-20 employees
 - (c) meet with job club weekly/biweekly
 - (d) coordinate workshop attendance of members
 - (e) provide positive reinforcement and encouragement
 - (f) attend job club leader meetings weekly
- (4) Responsibilities of Job Club Members:
 - (Limited to 20 hours)
 - (a) meet with leaders weekly/biweekly
 - (b) attend job search workshops
 - (c) prepare resume and SF-171
 - (d) review job vacancy information
 - (Limited to 12 hours)
 - (e) attend job fairs and interviews
 - (f) make employer contacts
- 7. Networking - with local associations, private and public sector employers in the area can be helpful on an ongoing basis as well as being helpful in establishing job fairs. Local associations that can help with referrals, carry publicity or listings of vacancies or offer other services (day care or baby sitting, transportation, etc.) should be kept on activity mailing lists. Have a member of the association visit the activity for a first-hand look at the types of skills and experience available for outplacement. Each activity will have to evaluate the quality and reputation of an association. Many offer assistance with placement and retirement programs and information about career transition issues. The local Chamber of Commerce is often a valuable source of such information.
- 8. State Employment Offices - offer many services for employees facing the possibility of job loss. For those facing unemployment, the local state employment office serves not only to make referrals but is usually the office where employees get unemployment compensation. If planned in advance many such offices will provide personnel who will come on-site to register employees and explain their rights and benefits. Employment counselors may also be available to be on-site for lunch time presentations to job clubs. Early contact with the State Employment Office is often beneficial to allow the local office to prepare for registration of displaced employees. Such

efforts will allow faster processing of benefits and enhance the likelihood of successful placements.

9. Resume Outplacement Programs - can be useful also to the local activity since many have developed expertise in this area. Many offer interview training videos, manuals, literature, etc. The staff of such firms may also have the advantage of enthusiasm for outplacement efforts since they are not directly affected by the downsizing. Since they deal in this subject on a daily basis they may also have a more accurate assessment of the employment possibilities in the local private sector. Many firms offer "canned" or "packaged" services only, while others may tailor their efforts to the needs of the particular activity. If the use of such a firm is to be contemplated by an activity, check their reputation, get several bids or proposals and compare success rates and costs before committing. Some firms offer no better services than those the local activity can develop themselves which may be critical if funds are in short supply.
10. Resume/SF-171 Preparation - can be taught locally by servicing personnelists or can be purchased from the types of firms noted above which provide outplacement services. Many tips on resume preparation, interviewing techniques, dressing for interviews and other job hunting successes can be found in researching local libraries, schools, universities or colleges or technical schools. Be careful of contracting for such efforts unless there is indication of high quality products and services. The local servicing personnel officials can often do as well while increasing credibility at the same time.
11. Information Systems - can provide demographic information on geographical areas of the country for employees interested in relocation. Listings of occupations, growth trends, economic forecasts and cost of living data are often available. Contact the OPM Regional Office serving your area. The Army also has Relocation Assistance Information System (RAIS) data and the Department of Labor has statistical information which may be valuable and of interest to employees. Activities should also contact their command and/or service headquarters for other automated information services available. (Appendix D)

B. Aftercare

1. Expanding Your Vocabulary

"Aftercare" is a new buzz word in personnel relations. It is a word with a lot of depth that the CPO and every one who works with people should know and understand. During DoD drawdowns and base closures, personnel staffs are concerned with those persons RIF'd, retiring, separating, etc. Once CPO's and the employers have all the paperwork processed, they give themselves a pat on the back and say "that's done". But, the employers job is far from done. Great care needs to be given to those workers left behind -- "aftercare" for their feelings, because they will assuredly experience a future of unknowns, apathy and reduced motivation.

2. "Aftercare" for the Remaining Workforce

- a. As the CPO you have a responsibility to educate employers of their "aftercare" responsibilities. Specifically, in a drawdown the overlooked segment of the defense workforce is the staff left behind to continue the workloads and meet the mission. Supervisors must be aware of the various emotions their remaining staffs will experience --- grieving for their colleagues, resentful over the loss of their fellow workers, low productivity, high anxiety ("will I be next") --- feelings which will result in mistakes being made and deadlines being missed.
- b. It is not uncommon to observe the uncaring boss who worries only about budget, the mission, and "his/her own skin." However, if they expect to preserve their work momentum, they must first understand what their employees are feeling, and make adjustments accordingly.
- c. The supervisors that say to their employees "consider yourself lucky to be here; let's keep the mission on track; you can't slack off just because we have a smaller staff" has not accepted the drawdown and all of its ramifications. The CPO needs to teach employers who lose personnel to ask themselves some hard questions:
 - (1) Do I need to reorganize? With a smaller staff, priorities must be reevaluated, work spaces may need to be reorganized, and the mission resized. An employer can't drawdown staff without experiencing changes in all facets of an operation.
 - (2) Does my chain-of-command understand that a drawdown on staff will surely mean a change in mission deliverability? Have I briefed top management fully and included my remaining staff in "brainstorming" sessions? Top management needs to be educated on what changes in organization and mission will be needed, as staff is reduced.
 - (3) Am I observing my remaining staff carefully, watching for negatives --- reduced motivation, increased sick leave, shortened tempers, personality conflicts and the disappearance of a teamwork ethic? Have I kept my lines of communication open with my employees? Am I finding new ways to inspire high levels of commitment and productivity? Employers need to learn counseling techniques on how to help their remaining employees cope with the changed circumstances.
 - (4) Before assigning new responsibilities, have I analyzed the employees, their strengths and weaknesses? Do I know my remaining personnel --- are they superb staffers, can they manage others, do they demand self-respect? Am I assigning the "right" people as managers, or am I contributing to the "Peter Principle?" Managers need to carefully analyze their remaining employees deciding who can assume more responsibility; who is eligible for upward mobility; who works best with whom; and who has reached their level of competence and can go no further. After an employer redesigns his/her wiring diagram for the reduction in personnel, they need to remember that assignments should not be given based on personalities, but rather on capabilities. A wiring diagram should always be based on mission.

- (5) If I reassign my people, will they need retraining? Are funds available? Managers may need to reassign persons to jobs, where they are not fully knowledgeable on the job requirements. Retraining may be necessary, and a good manager will anticipate the need, educate top management to the requirement and identify funds prior to reassigning their people. Ideally, retraining should precede job assignments, but in many cases a manager may need to fill a position with retraining to follow --- usually not more than 60 to 90 days thereafter.
- d. The CPO needs to introduce supervisors, managers and employers to "aftercare" and direct them on how to ask the correct questions to find the right answers. Give them references to read, conduct network sessions among employers so they can learn from each other and continue to be available for them when they need advice and help.
- e. No one should ignore the remaining workforce; they are the core of any future organization, and should be treated with sympathy and care.

3. Appeals/Grievances/Lawsuits

During a drawdown or base closure, the CPO is responsible for conducting all procedures according to current regulations. You have followed the "letter of the law" and have done a superb job in relocating personnel, informing them of their rights, benefits and services; yet, you will still have disgruntled employees. Why? That is not an easy question to answer. However, you need to recognize that there are procedures that employees can use -- appeals, grievances, and lawsuits --- and the CPO office needs to advise personnel on the pro's and con's of using such procedures. Also, if you know of impending actions, you should notify your legal offices and have all the necessary backup paperwork available, if needed.

4. Future Recruitment

- a. A CPO experiencing a base closure need not worry about future long-term recruitment. However, the installation implementing a drawdown, or several drawdowns over a span of years needs to recognize that negative propensity will exist among potential new employees.
- b. New employees may be thinking "why should I take a job with XYZ defense organization, if they have plans to impose more drawdowns in future years? Where will be my upward mobility? Will I move, and then be the next pink slip issued? These are hard questions, and in some cases you may not have all the answers. Just remember not to make false promises; and educate the employers to do the same. Honesty is always the best policy.
- c. Filling part-time positions may not be difficult; but assuring personnel of their future in full-time permanent positions may be a harder sell. Project a positive attitude for the command; show the employees how

joining the team will help their career development; and remember "word of mouth" is still the best recruitment advertising any organization can have. If you care about employees, go the "extra mile" to help them in their job search to find the "right job" for them. Then you will have a proactive employee willing to "take a chance and join your organization because the mission is important, the colleagues are professional and the command cares." And they will surely recommend others to come onboard.

5. Evaluating Reduction Procedures

- a. During the drawdown or base closure procedures constant evaluation of the ongoing systems should be made, and adjustments implemented accordingly. Each day you may learn a better way to solve a problem, and from that day forward substitute new knowledge to improve on current methods.
- b. How do you evaluate? Surveys and forms can be used in assessing the value of specific programs. For outplacement, distribute a form to ascertain what are the most important services the employees want; have job fair/job club forms for attendees to evaluate meeting times, handouts and overall effectiveness of information provided; design offer/resignation forms to know when employees have been offered a position and accepted or declined; create a separation survey to learn who participated in what services (why or why not), were their expectations in outplacement met, did they find a job, did the CPO office provide all the necessary support, were employers helpful, what improvements can be made in the future, etc.
- c. "Lessons learned" from other organizations include:
 - (1) Establishing mentoring programs
 - (2) Developing pathways for open dialogue between management and employees.
 - (3) Conducting continuous meetings with staffs from various interacting organizations to keep everyone informed (i.e., Outplacement, Industrial Relations, Personnel Operations, Employee Relations, EEO, Payroll, regional and local CPO offices).
 - (4) Establishing management and employee workshops covering subjects such as: understanding, coping and managing change; creating a vision for the future that everyone shares; reducing anxiety due to downsizing; integrating the family into individual job decisions made, etc.
- d. Asking for feedback from employers and employees is a gain for everyone. The CPO learns how to improve their program, the commander knows what is on the minds of his/her staff and workers, and the employees understand the services/benefits being provided.
- e. Continuously evaluating downsizing procedures is the full-loop system in information gathering. If you don't ask questions, make on-location

observations and document your findings, the next time downsizing occurs the organization will not have benchmarks from which to start.

C. Recovery and Revitalization

1. The following are typical concerns and issues that employees and management face when they are "remaining employees" after a reduction-in-force.
 - a. FEAR of losing their jobs in the future.
 - b. GUILT over not being separated when friends and possibly family have lost their jobs.
 - c. PRESSURE at the work-site directly related to lay-off situation.
 - (1) Performance anxiety
 - (2) Stress
 - (3) Job burnout
 - d. BREACHES in co-worker relationships/friendships due to fears of future layoffs.
 - e. LOSS OF LOYALTY since management may be seen by survivors as not having been loyal to separated employees.
 - f. ACTING AGAINST MANAGEMENT or undermining agency goals due to frustrations with layoffs and uncertainty about their own future.
2. In order to deal with these concerns and issues effectively, a two-phase approach that is directed to recovery and revitalization has been developed. A description of the two phases follows.
 - a. Recovery - Phase I
 - (1) The recovery phase attempts to minimize the negative impact of downsizing on remaining employees and prepare the agency for the revitalization phase. The recovery phase addresses the following topics:
 - (a) EDUCATE employees on environmental/economic/social factors creating the need for change.
 - (b) REDUCE ANXIETY due to downsizing.
 - (c) PROVIDE employees with an awareness of their value and their contribution to the mission and future.
 - (d) CREATE A VISION of the future
 - 1 Total Quality Management
 - 2 The strategic plan
 - (2) Workshops should be developed for management as well as employees. Management workshops should be held prior to

presenting workshops to employees. The following suggest issues to be covered in the workshops:

(a) Management Workshops

- 1 Gaining management understanding and support for the recovery effort
- 2 Exploring new communication efforts with their employees
- 3 Understanding and coping with change
- 4 Supporting Total Quality Leadership (TQL)

(b) Employee Workshops

- 1 Understanding change and the factor creating the need for change
- 2 Managing change
- 3 Reducing anxiety due to downsizing
 - a job burnout
 - b stress
 - c survivor guilt
 - d performance anxiety
- 4 Presenting the mission
- 5 Create a vision of the future and generating a recognition that everyone has a stake in and shares responsibility in making that vision a reality.

b. Revitalization - Phase II

- (1) The revitalization phase is a continuing attempt following a recovery to rebuild employee commitment to the mission and future.
- (2) The following issues will play a part in revitalization:
 - (a) DEVELOP PATHWAYS FOR OPEN DIALOGUE between management and employees.
 - (b) MAXIMIZE ACTIVITY WORKFORCE to avoid future downsizing. Develop potential of permanent workers through:
 - 1 cross-training
 - 2 retraining
 - 3 rotation
 - (c) INITIATE MANAGEMENT TRAINING on effective use of human resources with focus on integrating business needs with employee needs.
 - (d) ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEE/CAREER DEVELOPMENT with emphasis on job satisfaction rather than promotion potential.

- (e) **ESTABLISH MENTORING PROGRAMS** for professional occupations.
- (f) **RESTRUCTURE ORGANIZATIONS** to formally incorporate employee participation in decision and policy-making.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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FORCE MANAGEMENT
AND PERSONNEL


MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Outplacement Assistance

As the Department proceeds with reducing the civilian work force, it is imperative that we search for ways to minimize the impact on the individuals who will be adversely affected. While we are developing several initiatives at our level that will be applicable DoD-wide, it is still important for local commanders to make an assessment of their own work force situation, and provide appropriate local assistance. The Department of Defense is authorized to expend appropriated funds for outplacement assistance where this benefits the Department and the costs are reasonable. Such authority has been confirmed by the Comptroller General who views such assistance as a legitimate matter of agency personnel administration.

We consider outplacement assistance to be an integral part of our personnel management program. Consistent with the Comptroller General decision, such assistance could include payment for outplacement courses and for contractor placement services, so long as there is no job placement fee; administrative excusal from duty for job searches and interviews; administrative support, such as use of computers, copiers and other equipment; and the use of clerical support to prepare job applications or resumes. Commanders, Activity Heads, and equivalent officials are delegated authority to provide outplacement assistance as appropriate.

The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Civilian Personnel Policy/Equal Opportunity will provide any additional guidance that is necessary.


Christopher Jehn